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SENATE MEMORIAL 19

46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2004

INTRODUCED BY

Pete Campos

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE INTERSTATE STREAM COMMISSION TO INVESTIGATE
BONITO LAKE AS A SOURCE OF WATER TO MEET ITS DELIVERY
OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE PECOS RIVER COMPACT AS WELL AS TO PROVIDE
A SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY FOR AREAS WITHIN THE PECOS
RIVER SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, the United States supreme court has found that
New Mexico has undelivered water to Texas under the Pecos River
Compact; and

WHEREAS, the Rio Bonito is a tributary of the Pecos river,
and Bonito lake, located at the headwaters of the Rio Bonito,
impounds water that is then conveyed westerly into the Tularosa
basin, a basin that is not hydrologically connected to the
Pecos river system; and

WHEREAS, the out-of-basin conveyance of water from a river

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1 tributary to the Pecos river affects the flows into the Pecos
2 river; and

3 WHEREAS, planning documents developed by water users in
4 the Tularosa basin indicate their intention to ultimately end
5 their reliance on diversions from Bonito lake; and

6 WHEREAS, the current drought has demonstrated that for the
7 Ruidoso area, nestled in the southern Rocky mountains and on
8 the western edge of the Pecos river system, continued reliance
9 on existing surface and ground water supplies may be
10 problematic; and

11 WHEREAS, the Ruidoso area requires additional water
12 supplies in order to provide a sustainable water supply for its
13 existing population; and

14 WHEREAS, Bonito lake could aid the state in meeting its
15 delivery obligations to Texas under the Pecos River Compact and
16 at the same time provide a much-needed water supply for the
17 Ruidoso area; and

18 WHEREAS, meeting New Mexico's obligations on the Pecos
19 river is a matter of statewide public interest;

20 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
21 OF NEW MEXICO that the interstate stream commission be
22 requested to investigate the potential to use water from Bonito
23 lake to aid the state in meeting its delivery obligations under
24 the Pecos River Compact while simultaneously providing a water
25 supply for the Ruidoso area; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interstate stream
2 commission be requested to investigate the potential of
3 alternate sources of supply for water users in the Tularosa
4 basin, including analysis of using brackish waters and water
5 from the Salt basin in southern Otero county, to ensure that
6 Otero county continues to have abundant water supplies for its
7 entire population and for future economic expansion and
8 population growth; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that because meeting delivery
10 obligations on the Pecos river is of statewide public interest,
11 the potential issuance of state-issued general obligation bonds
12 to provide funds for alternate water supplies for the Ruidoso
13 and Alamogordo areas should be pursued expeditiously; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interstate stream
15 commission make a report of its investigations to the
16 appropriate interim water committee; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
18 transmitted to the interstate stream commission and the New
19 Mexico finance authority.